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Commencement Address, Denton High School

Max S. Baucus

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Senator * or Department*: **BAUCUS**

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Record Type*: **Speeches & Remarks**

MONTH/YEAR of Records*: **May-1987**

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(1) Subject*: **None**

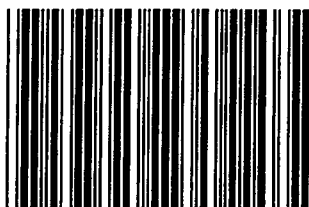
(select subject from controlled vocabulary, if your office has one)

(2) Subject* **Commencement Address, Denton High School**

DOCUMENT DATE*: **05/24/1987**

(Example: 01/12/1966)

* "required information"



BAUCUS

COMMENCEMENT ADDRESS

DENTON HIGH SCHOOL

MAY 24, 1987

I AM VERY HONORED TO BE HERE WITH YOU TODAY.
AS MANY OF YOU REMEMBER, WHEN I VISITED DENTON
FOUR YEARS AGO, YOU ASKED ME IF I'D COME BACK AND
GIVE YOUR GRADUATION ADDRESS. I'M VERY PLEASED
I'VE BEEN ABLE TO DO THAT.

Kurt DeMars
Anita Leach

THIS IS A VERY IMPORTANT DAY IN YOUR LIVES.
IT'S A DAY OF MIXED EMOTIONS. YOU'RE FEELING THE
SATISFACTION OF FINISHING HIGH SCHOOL--THE EX-
CITEMENT OF GOING ON TO COLLEGE OR GETTING OUT ON
YOUR OWN--AND THE SADNESS OF LEAVING FAMILIAR
FRIENDS AND TEACHERS. YOU PROBABLY DON'T KNOW
WHETHER TO CHEER OR CRY.

YOU'RE FACING MAJOR CHALLENGES, WHETHER
YOU'RE GOING ON TO COLLEGE, OR TAKING OTHER PATHS

IN YOUR LIVES. BUT THE PEOPLE OF DENTON ARE NO STRANGERS TO CHALLENGE.

WHEN I CAME TO DENTON FOUR YEARS AGO, WE WERE TRYING TO SEE WHAT WE COULD DO TO SAVE YOUR RAILROAD. BURLINGTON NORTHERN WAS PULLING OUT AND DENTON WAS FACED WITH SOME BIG CHALLENGES TO KEEP ITS ECONOMY ALIVE.

THE PEOPLE OF DENTON ACCEPTED THAT CHALLENGE. PEOPLE LIKE GENE DEMARS, BOB PATTERSON, DICK HITCHCOCK, AND MANY OTHERS, BELIEVED IN THEMSELVES AND THEIR COMMUNITY. THEY PUT THEIR HEADS TOGETHER, GOT DOWN TO WORK, AND CREATED THE CENTRAL MONTANA RAILROAD.

THE RAILROAD IS SUCCEEDING. AND I THINK IT'S A VERY POSITIVE EXAMPLE OF WHAT CAN BE DONE WHEN PEOPLE STICK TO THE BASIC HUMAN VALUES OF SELF-ESTEEM, COMMITMENT AND HARD WORK.

Bolqna

Latin, Greek

Hebrew

I WANT TO SPEND JUST A FEW MINUTES TODAY TALKING TO YOU ABOUT THOSE HUMAN VALUES. THEY ARE THE VALUES THAT WILL DETERMINE WHETHER OR NOT WE LEAD FULL, RICH AND PRODUCTIVE LIVES.

WHEN I THINK OF VALUES, I AUTOMATICALLY THINK ABOUT MY FATHER. I'M SURE MANY OF YOU WOULD THINK ABOUT YOUR PARENTS. MY FATHER HAS TAUGHT ME MORE THAN ANY PERSON I KNOW ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING TRUE TO OUR VALUES. HE HASN'T DONE IT WITH ADVICE. IN FACT MY FATHER DOESN'T REALLY GIVE ME MUCH ADVICE. HE'S DONE IT BY EXAMPLE.

JUST WHAT ARE THOSE VALUES? ~~THAT ARE SO IMPOR-~~
~~TANT?~~

FOR ME THERE ARE TWO. THE FIRST COME FROM SHAKESPEARE: TO THINE OWN SELF BE TRUE. THAT'S ESSENTIAL. EACH OF YOU IS A DISTINCT, UNIQUE, INDIVIDUAL PERSON. THERE IS ONLY ONE OF YOU. THERE IS NOBODY ELSE LIKE YOU. YOU ARE SPECIAL.

YOU SHOULD DO IN LIFE WHATEVER IT IS THAT YOU INDIVIDUALLY WANT TO DO. SURE, YOU SHOULD LISTEN TO THE ADVICE OF YOUR FRIENDS, YOUR TEACHERS, AND YOUR PARENTS. BUT AFTER YOU'VE HEARD THEIR ADVICE, AFTER YOU'VE THOUGHT ABOUT IT, CONSIDERED IT, DIGESTED IT, BE SURE YOU DO ONLY WHAT YOU YOURSELF WANT TO DO. YOU ARE YOUR OWN BEST AUTHORITY.

EACH OF YOU WILL TAKE A DIFFERENT PATH. SOME OF YOU WILL GET MARRIED, SOME OF YOU WILL GET DIVORCED. SOME OF YOU WILL HAVE CHILDREN; OTHERS OF YOU WON'T. SOME OF YOU WILL PURSUE CAREERS IN BUSINESS, IN THE LAW, IN AGRICULTURE OR IN EDUCATION; OTHERS OF YOU WILL JUNK IT ALL AND GO OFF TO DO SOMETHING ELSE. SOME OF YOU MAY BECOME WEALTHY AND WELL KNOWN; OTHERS OF YOU WON'T BE QUITE SO RICH AND WON'T SEE YOUR NAMES IN NEWSPAPERS OR MAGAZINES.

BUT NONE OF THAT REALLY MATTERS. WHAT MATTERS IS THAT IT'S YOUR CHOICE, NOT THAT OF SOMEONE ELSE.

I DON'T CARE WHAT IT IS--WHETHER IT'S SOMETHING MUNDANE LIKE BUYING CLOTHES OR A CAR, OR WHETHER IT'S SOMETHING DARING OR RISKY LIKE CHANGING A CAREER OR PURSUING A DREAM. YOU DO WHAT YOU WANT TO DO--WHATEVER IT IS THAT DEEP DOWN FULFILLS YOU THE MOST, IN THE BEST SENSE OF THE TERM.

IF YOU DO, I GUARANTEE YOU'LL DO VERY WELL.

THE SECOND VALUE ~~SECOND~~ FOLLOWS FROM THE FIRST. ONCE YOU'VE MADE THOSE DECISIONS FOR YOURSELF, HONESTLY, WHATEVER THEY ARE--THEN BE SURE YOU CARRY THEM OUT IN THE VERY BEST WAY YOU CAN. AS MY FATHER ONCE SAID, "ANYTHING WORTH DOING, IS WORTH DOING WELL."

IT'S HOW YOU DO WHAT YOU DO THAT COUNTS. IN FACT, THIS MAY BE EVEN MORE IMPORTANT. THE MEANS MAY BE MORE IMPORTANT THAN THE ENDS.

THAT "HOW YOU DO IT," THAT "MEANS," REALLY COMES DOWN TO A COMMITMENT TO EXCELLENCE.

I BELIEVE THE WORLD IS MOST SHAPED BY THOSE PEOPLE WHO HAVE A COMMITMENT TO EXCELLENCE--A COMMITMENT TO BE, AT ALL TIMES, IN ALL PLACES, UNDER ALL CIRCUMSTANCES, THE VERY BEST THEY CAN BE AT WHATEVER THEY DO.

JOHN GARDNER SAID IT BEST WHEN HE WROTE: "AN EXCELLENT PLUMBER IS INFINITELY MORE ADMIRABLE THAN AN INCOMPETENT PHILOSOPHER. THE SOCIETY THAT SCORNS EXCELLENCE IN PLUMBING, BECAUSE PLUMBING IS A HUMBLE ACTIVITY, AND TOLERATES SHODDINESS IN

PHILOSOPHY BECAUSE IT IS AN EXALTED ACTIVITY, WILL HAVE NEITHER GOOD PLUMBING NOR GOOD PHILOSOPHY. NEITHER ITS PIPES NOR ITS THEORIES WILL HOLD WATER."

THAT PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE, I HAVE LEARNED, COMES FROM STRIVING WITH ALL OF ONE'S PHYSICAL AND SPIRITUAL MIGHT.

IT'S HARD WORK. THERE'S NO SUBSTITUTE FOR IT. BUT IT'S ESSENTIAL, AND VERY SATISFYING.

SOMETIMES YOU'LL MEET WHAT AT FIRST SEEM TO BE INSURMOUNTABLE OBSTACLES, DEAD ENDS. THAT'S WHEN THE WORK REALLY BEGINS. OR AS VINCE LOMBARDI SAID, "WHEN THE GOING GETS TOUGH, THE TOUGH GET GOING."

WINSTON CHURCHILL, IN HIS COMMENCEMENT ADDRESS TO HIS BOARDING SCHOOL, PUT IT THIS WAY: "NEVER GIVE IN. NEVER GIVE IN. NEVER GIVE IN. NEVER. NEVER. NEVER. NEVER. NEVER GIVE IN. NEVER GIVE IN. NEVER GIVE IN TO MATTERS GREAT OR SMALL UNLESS WHEN COMMON SENSE SO DICTATES."

IT'S NO WONDER GERMANY COULDN'T DEFEAT
BRITAIN.

REMEMBER TO LEARN FROM YOUR MISTAKES.
SOMEONE ONCE SAID THAT WISDOM IS BASED ON EX-
PERIENCE, AND EXPERIENCE IS BASED ON MISTAKES.
I'VE CERTAINLY FOUND THAT TO BE TRUE. YOU'LL
LEARN MORE FROM YOUR MISTAKES--THE BIG ONES AND
THE LITTLE ONES--THAN YOU MIGHT IMAGINE.

BE CREATIVE. LET YOUR MINDS FLY. FOLLOW
YOUR CURIOSITY. IT'S FUN. THINK OF NEW WAYS TO
DO OLD THINGS. CHALLENGE YOUR ASSUMPTIONS. AS
JOHNNY WOODEN, THE REVERED UCLA BASKETBALL COACH
SAID, "IT'S WHAT WE LEARN AFTER WE KNOW IT ALL
THAT COUNTS."

ABOVE ALL, LAUGH. STAND BACK. SEE THE
LIGHTER SIDE. LAUGH AT YOURSELF, IN PARTICULAR.
IT'LL UNLOCK NEW OPPORTUNITIES. YOU'LL SEE MORE.
BESIDES, IT'S FUN.

AND,
~~AND,~~ BE SURE TO REVERE AND HONOR THE
MYSTERIOUS AND SPIRITUAL SIDE OF LIFE. WE DON'T
HAVE ALL THE ANSWERS, AND WE NEVER WILL. WE DON'T

EVEN HAVE VERY MANY OF THE ANSWERS. THAT'S GOOD.
THE MORE WE STRIVE, MIGHTILY, AND THE MORE THAT WE
KNOW--THE MORE NEW QUESTIONS WE DISCOVER AND THE
MORE WE FIND OUT WE DON'T KNOW. IT IS IN THAT
PARADOX THAT WE FIND ~~CLUES~~ CLUES. ~~CLUES~~

THIS ALL COMES DOWN TO PUTTING YOUR WHOLE
BEING INTO EVERYTHING YOU DO. IF YOU ARE TRUE TO
YOURSELF--DEEP DOWN AND HONESTLY--IF YOU THEN
STRIVE WITH ALL YOUR PHYSICAL AND SPIRITUAL MIGHT
--THEN YOU REALLY CAN'T LOSE. YOU'LL EXPERIENCE
JOY AND SORROW, ELATION AND SADNESS. BUT YOU'LL
BE ABLE TO LOOK BACK WITH PRIDE THAT YOU LIVED
YOUR VERY BEST. THAT WILL BE YOUR DEEPEST FUL-
FILLMENT.

ALL OF US--YOUR TEACHERS, YOUR FRIENDS, ABOVE
ALL YOUR PARENTS AND FAMILY, HOPE THAT EACH OF YOU
IS FORTUNATE ENOUGH TO REACH THAT GOAL.

GOOD LUCK, AND MAY GOD BLESS EACH ONE OF YOU.